

## FRAZER RIVER MINES

Experiences of Gold Seekers in California Back in 1859.

### A CONFLICT OF AUTHORITY

An Interesting Story of a Famous Mining Camp Where Lawlessness Prevailed—The American Colony at Hill's Bar.

In the fall of 1859 Hill's Bar, on the Fraser river, B. C., was a physical reproduction of the mining camps that characterized California only a few years before. The reported discoveries of wondrous gold fields in that inhospitable region attracted to it a large number of miners and adventurers of every class from the yet young Golden state. At that period Hill's Bar numbered perhaps 200 Californians, pursuing various vocations, but principally mining, among whom were the following San Franciscans, who had played a somewhat conspicuous role in the early history of that city: Charles Wilson, Ned McGowan, Barney Mulligan, James Farrell, Louis and Peter Burns, John Bagley, Alexander Roberts, Robert Cushing and several others whose names the writer is unable to secure. The American colony of Hill's Bar, taken altogether, was as motley an assemblage as the mind can conceive. As a general thing they were men possessed of a high sense of honor, and generous to their own disadvantage, but void of all manner of adventure, and overflowing in such a manner with animal spirits and vitality as to frequently arouse the indignation of the staid British element, by which they were surrounded. On Christmas eve, 1859, the San Franciscans herein named, accompanied by others, bent upon having what in those unrestricted days was termed "a socially good time," crossed the river and visited the town of Fort Yale, a half mile distant. That night a negro saloonkeeper at Fort Yale gave a ball, to which the Hill's Bar men for quite a while unsuccessfully designed to gain peaceable admittance, and the result was that they eventually forced an entrance into the hall, not without encountering determined opposition, however. A few stout blows were exchanged and several glasses shattered, and when the limited amusement the dance afforded, they retired, the acknowledged heroes of the night.

At that time there was at Fort Yale a pedantic justice of the peace named Wandell. His dislike of an American was more than that of the latest and most patriotic Frenchman harbors this day against a subject of the German empire, and he conceived that the disturbance at the negro ball would furnish him a most desirable opportunity to severely punish the lawless, unbecoming invaders of British soil. No American was the recipient of mercy at the hands of this bigoted dogberry, and it was no unusual act on his part to keep Americans incarcerated in a foul cell month after month for the most trivial offense, without giving them a hearing. The Hill's Bar offenders, cognizant of Wandell's prejudice, declined to submit their case to him, and demanded a trial before the justice of their own camp, a man named Perry. In the meantime, however, the principal witnesses for the defense, although no participant in the disturbance, had been locked up by Wandell's order.

The Americans evidenced an unmistakable disposition to have their trial proceeded without their witnesses. "How is the witness for your defense to appear, when he is himself a prisoner?" abstractedly inquired Judge Perry, whose legal lore was evidently greatly abridged. "Send your constable, properly empowered to bring him," was the prompt reply.

The suggestion was at once adopted by the learned jurist, and the court adjourned for several hours, when intelligence was received that Wandell, in a fit of passion, superinduced, perhaps, by the absorption of an extra large quantity of spirits, had also ordered the arrest of the Hill's Bar official. The feeling of indignation which this startling news gave birth to at the bar was intense indeed.

Judge Perry was not amused and had to seek further action in the case, which was assuming a serious phase. Charles Wilson acted as spokesman and said:

"Judge, if you will permit us Americans to swear allegiance to her majesty, the queen, for the space of 12 hours' time, we will guarantee to have our witness and your constable on Hill's Bar long before we are again American citizens. And we will furthermore arrest Judge Wandell for contempt of court."

The requisite oath was administered and in less than an hour thereafter a small battalion of well-armed Americans, the leader provided with proper credentials, rowed across the river to Fort Yale. The rescuers marched to Wandell's office with a martial air as if they had belonged to the "Old Guard."

Although the court was in session the leader unceremoniously placed Wandell under arrest, and ordered him to deliver up the prison keys. The judicial martinet took in the situation at a glance, and feeling assured that his captors were in no earnest he doggedly obeyed their orders. The constable and witness were at once released from their respective places of confinement, as well as numerous Americans held for trifling offenses.

Wandell, after mustering a bit of courage, boisterously objected to being treated with such indignity by a horde of "blasted aliens," but he was safely landed before Judge Perry, who fined him for contempt and then the captives were discharged with a light reprimand.

In the few hours during which the incidents were being enacted, the British residents of Fort Yale were furious with excitement, and the respectable American element had to accept its share of abuse with the rougher class, the infuriated Englishmen evincing no disposition to separate the wheat from the chaff.

When the excitement had reached its highest pitch, Wandell dispatched a message to Governor Douglas, at Victoria, charging the Americans along the Fraser river with high treason and an almost successful inauguration of a reign of terror and anarchy.

It is needless to say that the movements of the indignant Wandell did not remain sub rosa long, and soon it was whispered that the governor would certainly send troops up the river to annihilate the entire American colony. The resident Americans of all classes, not placing much faith in the mercy of a small British army, prepared themselves for the most desperate emergency, and in less than twenty-four hours there was scarcely an American at Hill's Bar or at Fort Yale who had not constructed himself into a walking arsenal.

The verification of the popular belief, a company of mounted infantry, fully equipped for a campaign, arrived at Fort Yale, accompanied by Lieutenant Judge Hilly, the crown counsel and other dignitaries from Victoria, also one Jules David, a prominent member of the San Francisco vigilance committee. The arrival of the troops and high officials caused a little commotion in that small town, and the more unreasonable English element suggested the expediency of the immediate arrest and trial of all

suspected Americans; but wiser counsel prevailed. Had such summary action been taken civil war on a small scale would have been inevitable. The Americans had been misrepresented by Wandell, and they felt confident of their ability to clear themselves, if the Victoria officials would grant them a fair hearing; but they were determined not to allow one of their number to be taken either by the civil or military authorities. Such an attempt would have resulted in great loss of life and property on both sides. Eventually it was decided that several of the leading Americans should pay their respects to the civil officials from Victoria, and confer with them as to the best method of adjusting the insignificant difficulty which had unnecessarily assumed them to Fort Yale. While the conference was happily progressing Ned McGowan unfortunately met Jules David on the street, and recognized him as one of the men who had subjected him to much annoyance during the San Francisco vigilance committee days, he hesitatingly proceeded to knock him down and otherwise handle him indecently. This was a signal for renewed excitement. The English residents, ignorant of David's antecedents, and supposing him to be a victim of an assault, attacked because he had accompanied the Victoria party, grew boundlessly furious, and if McGowan had not speedily escaped to Hill's Bar his life would have certainly have paid the penalty for his untimely indiscretion.

Furthermore, McGowan's conduct in this particular almost disturbed the conference, which was tending in the direction of an amicable adjustment of all trouble.

However, without entering into tiresome details, the representatives of both factions arrived at an understanding to the effect that a mass meeting be held on the following evening, when an opportunity would be given the Americans to present their side of the question at issue.

The meeting was held in a large stake building, capable of holding 500 people. At an early hour a surging mass of humanity arrived at the main entrance, and the Americans were distinguishable by their regardlessness of attire, they being principally miners, who in that region did not pay much attention to dress. Every seat and all standing room in this fragile structure were occupied upon this important occasion. Ned McGowan, being a fluent and convincing speaker, was to have presented the American side of the case; but as he was unable to put in an appearance, owing to his unfriendly encounter on the previous day, John Hagley was selected to speak in behalf of his countrymen. This speaker proved very unhappy in his selection of language, and the British element, at a very early stage of the meeting, boisterously demonstrated their disinclination to listen to him; hence the meeting had to be dismissed without the accomplishment of the desired result.

Now another consultation was necessary, and the Americans were granted the privilege of submitting their defense in writing, to be read at a public meeting, the date of which was fixed for the following evening. In the interim there was to be no hostile demonstration on either side. At the appointed hour the rickety stake building was again filled to its utmost capacity, and just as the British defense was about being read, Charles Wilson, one of the American leaders, clad in a red shirt, pants (a little worse for wear) stuck in his boots, and a shockingly bad hat, requested permission to make a few remarks. Wilson in the early days of San Francisco had been an alderman and subsequently a supervisor of that city, and during that period had frequently mollified mobs of greater or lesser numbers by a logical, if not altogether elegant, line of argument. He mounted the speaker's stand and drew a graphic picture of the existing "tempest in a teapot." While he spoke earnestly and refuted the facts as they were, he was also fortunate enough to keep the opposition in good humor. He spoke as if by inspiration, and his English listeners, upon concluding he received the congratulations of the Victoria officials for having established so good a case for his countrymen, and twenty-four hours later the charge of "high treason" against the American residents of Fort Yale and Hill's Bar was dismissed. Wandell, the prime cause of all the trouble, was soon thereafter officially decapitated, and no further civil wars were threatened in that immediate vicinity.

**Mines and mining.**  
In the Mineral Hill fraction, which is situated in Smith's camp, a fine body of carbonates have been discovered at a depth of 25 feet. The vein is widening with depth.

The Blue Bird mine on Blacktail mountain in the Pend d'Oreille district, Idaho, is assaying 400 ounces of silver to the ton. The Webster claim in the same district, is making a fine showing.

The Comstock mines were not all bonanzas. Outside the consolidated Virginia and the California, the actual loss in that district during 25 years assessment runs up to over \$25,000,000.

Rumor is afloat that a smelter will be built at Robinson at an early date by some of our most prominent men. It will be built to benefit the numerous mines at Blackhawk and Robinson.

The Iron Mountain company are shipping about ten tons of ore daily to the Helena smelter. It is expected the lower tunnel will be completed, which will tap the vein at a considerable greater depth. A new blowler is just being put in.

The greatest silver producers in Idaho. The Elara company on their 400-foot level, are within a short distance of the vein of the Bannock, and their pay chute is continuous. A shaft will be started next spring at the face of the Bannock tunnel.

Frank Simpson has tapped the Bannock ledge, at Banner, with a 120-foot tunnel. The vein was tapped at the depth 40 feet, and is five feet wide, and makes a good showing for that near the surface. The Bannock is the first east extension of the Weaverville, which is one of the

Work is progressing rapidly on the Bell of the Hill, or West Iron mountain, and Thomas Maloney and Morgan O'Connell have a contract to sink the shaft to the 150 foot level. They are sinking on the ledge and some very fine galena ore is being taken out, and the property bids fair to be equal to the Iron Mountain.

John Mackey, young Flood and other capitalists, are starting to sink a few more miles in the old bonanza Gold Hill shafts at Virginia City. Preparations are being made to start the pumps, and it is likely that the old mining camp will have another boom for a few months, until the ambitious young hereditary millionaires become convinced that they don't know as much as their sires.

The two Watkins Bros., who have the contract for running the tunnel on the Sunlight claim, Idaho, have been in town for two or three days past. The tunnel is in 300 feet, and they expect to have to run it 75 or 80 feet further to get directly under the cut made on the surface at the discovery stake. The streak of blue ore has been cut through. It is something like 40 feet in width, and before the other wall is reached other streaks equally wide and rich may be found. John O'Connell and others of experience who have examined samples say that the Sunlight is milling ore.

## THE GREAT NORTHWEST

Topics of General Interest in the New States and Elsewhere.

### MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

Of Dawson County Fair and Sales Association—A Costly Coat—A Chinaman Rescued by an Indian.

Emmett Robb, a switchman in the employ of the Union Pacific, was killed the other day in the Albina yards, Wash. He was coupling cars, and was caught between them and fearfully crushed.

The Chinese cook of the bark Rufus E. Wood, loading coal at the North Seattle bunkers, while walking down the incline was struck by a coal car and knocked off into the bay. An Indian standing near by went to the rescue and fished the unfortunate Celestial out. Beyond bruised shoulders, the Chinaman was not badly hurt.

As Professor Williams, principal, was leaving the Eugene, Ore., school one day last week, he was assaulted by two young hoodlums with rocks, receiving severe bruises on the head. The boys, Otto Roberts and Charles Reed, pleaded guilty to assault and battery, and were fined \$10 each and costs. The trouble arose from the punishment of the boys in school a few days ago.

The other day a couple of prominent live stock owners who live at the capital city of Helena were swapping sympathy with each other and endeavoring to account for the light demand and low prices for range horses and cattle. The horse raiser accounted for the depressed condition of the horse market by saying that steam motors and electric street railways had ruined it. The cattleman, who was at the time in the incipient stage of a gripe and not feeling well otherwise, concluded among other things that the Chicago big four had not given the range stockmen a square deal, and, to cap the climax, he had just read where "a d—d Illinois professor was trying to educate the people how to live without eating beef. I tell you, sir, the business is ruined!"—Fort Benton River Press.

Albert Henry, the Smith river valley rancher, who brought Louis Vetty to the city yesterday, says that the gray wolves are both numerous and dangerous in that vicinity, says the Great Falls Leader. During the past winter they have descended to the ranches and killed numbers of calves, several of his stock being killed and devoured by them. The present snow storm will make them much more aggressive and bold and it is necessary to keep a close watch over the range stock. These are not the coyotes of the valleys but the big timber wolves and if pressed by hunger they will not hesitate to attack human beings. They are extremely hard to kill ordinarily, keeping close in the timber during the day and sallying forth at night in bands of six to 10. Mr. Henry apprehends that considerable trouble will be had in getting rid of them and considers the ranges very unsafe at the present time.

Mr. Johnson, foreman of a gang of men in the employ of Earl & Donahue, contractors for the Great Northern railroad at Redmond Beach, 10 miles down the sound, was killed yesterday about noon by a heavy landslide at that place. Johnson was buried some ten feet under the ground by the great slide of earth and was presumably killed outright. For the past two or three days it has been raining and snowing in that section, and in consequence the ground has become very moist. A large force of men were at work in a heavy cut under Johnson's direction. The earth was noticed to move slowly at first, and the men becoming frightened, all ran out of the cut. For a moment the sliding earth rested and Johnson again ran down into the cut for the purpose of getting his coat, which he had left behind. He had got hold of the coat and started back when tons of earth slid down upon him, burying him beneath. His comrades rushed like Trojans to rescue him, but it was nearly an hour before his body could be found. Johnson was quite dead—beyond any possible assistance.

The stockholders of the Dawson County Fair and Sales association met at Glendive Wednesday and elected the following board of directors for the ensuing year: Harry Helms, Dominick Cavanaugh, James Ramsey, David R. Mead, Henry Dion, Jno. B. Kelly and Martin Newcomer. The directors met Thursday and elected the following officers: President, Harry Helms; vice president, David R. Mead; secretary, James R. Ramsey; treasurer, Henry Dion. The directors offer \$2,500 in purses for the spring meeting, which begins June 17 and continues the 18th and 19th. The association is in a flourishing condition and the secretary has received letters from all parts of the state in regard to the programme for the spring meeting. The track when completed will be the best half-mile track in the west. All the stables will be shingle roof, with box stalls, and the best of accommodations for men and horses. Eastern Montana is fast coming to the front with good running and trotting stock, and will surprise the west side this season. Programmes will be sent out this week.

The recent discoveries made near Boise City have caused no little comment in mining circles. For years and years these properties have been lying there even unprospected. The ground was passed over as worthless by scores of experienced miners, so called, and only until a short time ago was it known that the hills near this city were fairly alive with ledges of ore as rich as found in any of the old stand-by mines of the state. The discoverer endeavored to keep the matter a secret, and for some time succeeded in doing so; but his scheme was soon betrayed by an over-zealous miner who had handled the samples brought to this city for assay, followed the discoverer to his "den," and in his anxiety to keep the matter a secret himself, in a short time gave the thing away completely, and scores of people flocked to the spot and located claims. Many more locations will be made in the spring, when a mill will in all probability be erected. Parties interested in some of the best properties are now in the East negotiating for sufficient capital to work the mines, purchase machinery for working the ore and bringing the same to the ground. Assays from one of the mines in this locality give \$700 gold, with a small percentage of silver and lead, per ton.

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